

August 2009

Newsletter



Enabling communities
to help themselves

Success for the Eye project

Nekemte Community Rural Eye Clinic Pilot Project (NECP) 2005-2009

'It is a bonus to support NECPWe have big problems in eye care...We don't have the skills or the capacity...NECP will be a relief for people in the west and even in the north.'

[Member of Government Disaster and
Preventions Office]



Waiting in the Out-Patients department

Grants totalling nearly £200,000, from Four Acre Trust, Exeter Ethiopia Link, Exmoor and Rotenburg (Germany) Rotarians, and Trowbridge Methodists have achieved the objective of establishing an eye health service in Nekemte. People are travelling from all parts of Ethiopia to regain sight. A year ago Mr Ahmed Muhammed aged 72 lost his sight. He *'heard on Ethiopian radio that a clinic had been established for the surrounding community'*.

He travelled, with help from his grandson, from Harar some 600 kms away. *'We know that a better service is here'* he said.



Patient from Harar hears about his operation

A Link team has supported Rev Alemu Nega the Project Manager and the Clinic staff by managing the grants, purchasing equipment with advice from experts in India, twice yearly visiting, meeting stakeholders, producing evaluation reports etc.

'This is a model clinic for all Oromia. Only one or two clinics in Ethiopia are as good as Nekemte Eye Care Clinic'

'Two things have made the clinic popular – the prices and the appropriateness of treatment'. The practitioners are trusted as is the quality of prescriptions'.

[Independent Evaluator for Federal Oromia

The objective of the service is to treat or prevent blindness. Around 50 people are examined in outpatients each weekday; 10 minor operations and 25 major surgeries occur each week. In total 18,000 people have been seen in outpatients; around 2,500 people have had cataract or other major surgery and 750 have had minor operations for injuries or trachoma. Income generation is growing and it is intended that the service is self sustainable within 8 years. Many thousands of people have been examined on field camps.



Yem teaching Habtamu in the slit lamp room

A spectacle workshop and opticians has been built and will be operational in the autumn. 4000 people have been refracted and some await prescription glasses to be made on site. 1500 reading glasses have been dispensed.

'I know the history of [NECP] I am always hearing good news...We hope to learn and expand to others from this example.....there is no danger of this [Clinic] deteriorating'.

[Deputy Commissioner Oromia Health Board

The pilot has achieved its goals. A funding bid to maintain the current service and extend it in order to send clinical teams to the poorest people in rural areas; provide public health measures to prevent eye disease; and provide early treatment for trachoma, has been enthusiastically embraced by Light for the World, an Austrian charity. They will fund EECMY to continue the service from July 2009 to 2012.

This is a very gratifying outcome for Exeter Ethiopia Link.

Alexis A Taylor

PS (Editor) - and HUGE thanks to Alex from all of us in the Link for making this Project happen despite numerous setbacks.

Anyone fancy a walk along the beautiful East Devon coast?

A SPONSORED WALK AROUND THE JURASSIC COAST AND THE OTTER VALLEY

Sunday 6th September 2009

Please join us on a walk to raise money to fund projects in 2010 to improve water and toilet facilities in the schools in and around Nekemte. The route will take in coastal paths, country lanes and riverside views as well as a chance to take a dip in the sea or enjoy an ice cream on the beach; a perfect end to the summer! A sponsorship form and details of the walk will be posted on the homepage of the website or can be obtained by emailing Peter Grainger at: petergrainger@eclipse.co.uk or 435648. We look forward to seeing you on the day.

Media/Publicity Officer Wanted

The committee is keen to find somebody who would be interested in taking on this role in order to give the Link a higher local public profile. If you're interested and would like to know more about this please contact Mark Howells on 01392-202713 or mshowells@blueyonder.co.uk

Update on Schools:

Since our visit to Ethiopia in April, we hear that the money left for improvements to water supplies and toilets in schools is being well spent. This includes the funds raised by our linked Broadclyst and Silverton schools. At Bekumsa Biya the spring is being protected from contamination by animals and access made better for water collection. At Diriba school (below) the new pit latrines have been constructed to replace the dilapidated wooden structures seen in April. A full report will follow the next visit in November.



Acoustic Café - 3rd October

Thanks to Jeff Sleeman there will be an Acoustic Café evening of live music (by a variety of local performers) with vegetarian food at Matthews Hall, Topsham on Saturday 3rd October (probably at 7.30pm), to raise funds for school libraries. Volunteers to help with food should contact petergrainger@eclipse.co.uk or 435648.

SELLING on eBay

Just a reminder that Paul Jordan, a friend of Penny Pullen's, has offered to sell items on eBay to raise money for Exeter-Ethiopia Link. Paul will advertise the goods, (photograph if necessary), sell and package them and post them off. It's up to us to find items to sell. So **empty your attics NOW**. Items must be of good quality as we want to keep a good name to be successful. Also to start with we would prefer to have articles which are not too big in size. Paul can be contacted at:

1 Lower Tithebarn Cottage
Tithebarn Lane
Pinhoe, Exeter EX1 3RQ
01392-466936, 07870-258175
pauljordan@hotmail.com

Articles may be left in his porch, or Penny would be willing to collect things: penpul@tiscali.co.uk or 01392-274603

easyfundraising.org.uk

Shopping on the Internet? If so you can raise money for the link at no extra cost.

1. Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk
2. Register choosing Exeter-Ethiopia Link as your chosen cause
3. Before purchasing an item - log-in to easyfundraising and search for the retailer you wish to use (over 600 to choose from including Amazon, Boots, Next, Argos etc)
4. Make your purchase as normal and a percentage (varies from each retailer) will automatically be donated to the link: £143 has been raised in the last year.

Also use www.easysearch.org.uk as your search engine and for each search you make a small amount is donated to the link. Happy Shopping and Searching...

Thank you to Roehampton University who donated £100 to the Link following a talk to them about our work in Ethiopia given by Penny Pullen earlier this year.

Any copy for future newsletters can be sent to the editor, Bruce Hebbard, at Cedar House, Pines Road, Exeter EX2 9EN tel: 01392-437479 or by e-mail to b.hebbard@talk21.com

***Exeter-Ethiopia Link
Registered Charity No 1000293***

Exeter-Ethiopia Link

The Exeter-Ethiopia Link was set up in 1987 to promote a Community Link between Exeter in Devon, England and Hareto in Wollega, Ethiopia. In 1994 the Link included the town of Nekemte.

The Link supports: Health, Water, Women's and Educational projects in Hareto and Nekemte and links between schools in Exeter and the communities in Ethiopia.

For further information contact:

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or (for membership)

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**or view our website:
www.exeterethiopiaLink.org**